

Big Splashes & Ripple Effects: Research Impact Services Across University Libraries

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Background & Methods

Background

While there is debate regarding the role research impact assessment should and does play in research evaluation, its growing prominence is inarguable (1-3). "Bibliometrics is an ideal field for academic librarians to develop and provide innovative services" (4), and libraries should "assume a more strategic role in research evaluation and its management" (5).

Bibliometric services are well-established outside of North America. In 2013, over 50% of surveyed libraries in Ireland, New Zealand, and Australia were offering bibliometric training, producing citation reports, and calculating research impact on behalf of individuals, groups, and institutions (5). Previous research has described the content of AAU member library guides and found that, while more well-known metrics such as Journal Impact factor were consistently described, ORCID and altmetrics were gaining prominence (6).

A survey of ARL members found that 96% of responding libraries (76/79) reported providing research impact services and indicated that these services were an area of growth (7). In this project, we conducted an environmental scan to determine if and how research impact services are documented and communicated through ARL member websites and the staffing models that support these services.

Methods

Using Association of Research Libraries (ARL) membership, we developed a list of the 114 top research universities in North America. We excluded public and special libraries.

We searched every institution's web site looking for information on research impact, including:

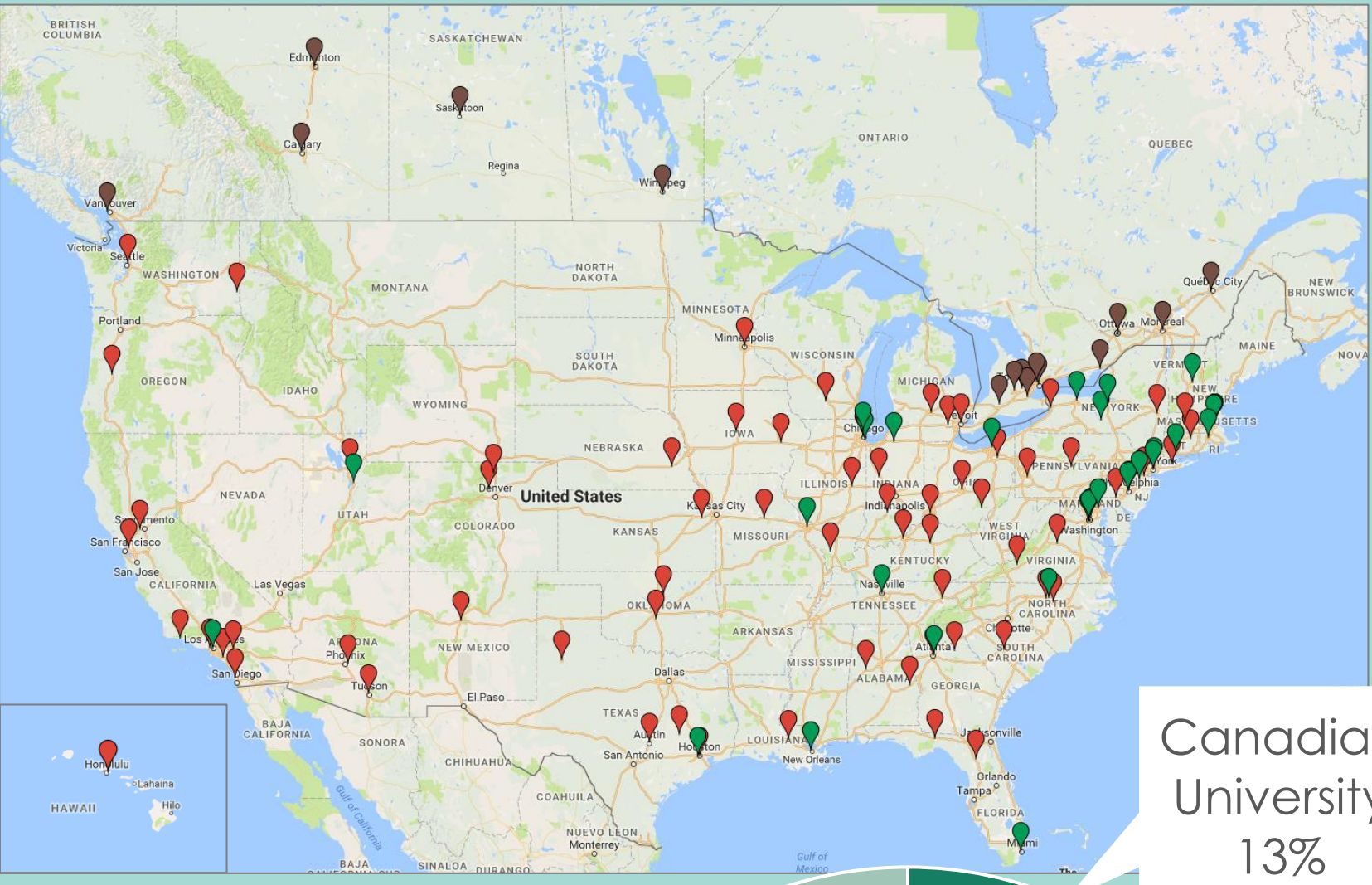
- Metrics (for journals, articles, individuals, and groups)
- Altmetrics
- ORCID
- Faculty Activity Reporting (FAR)
- Researcher Information Systems (RIS)

We identified what services and systems were being offered and who within the institution supported these initiatives.

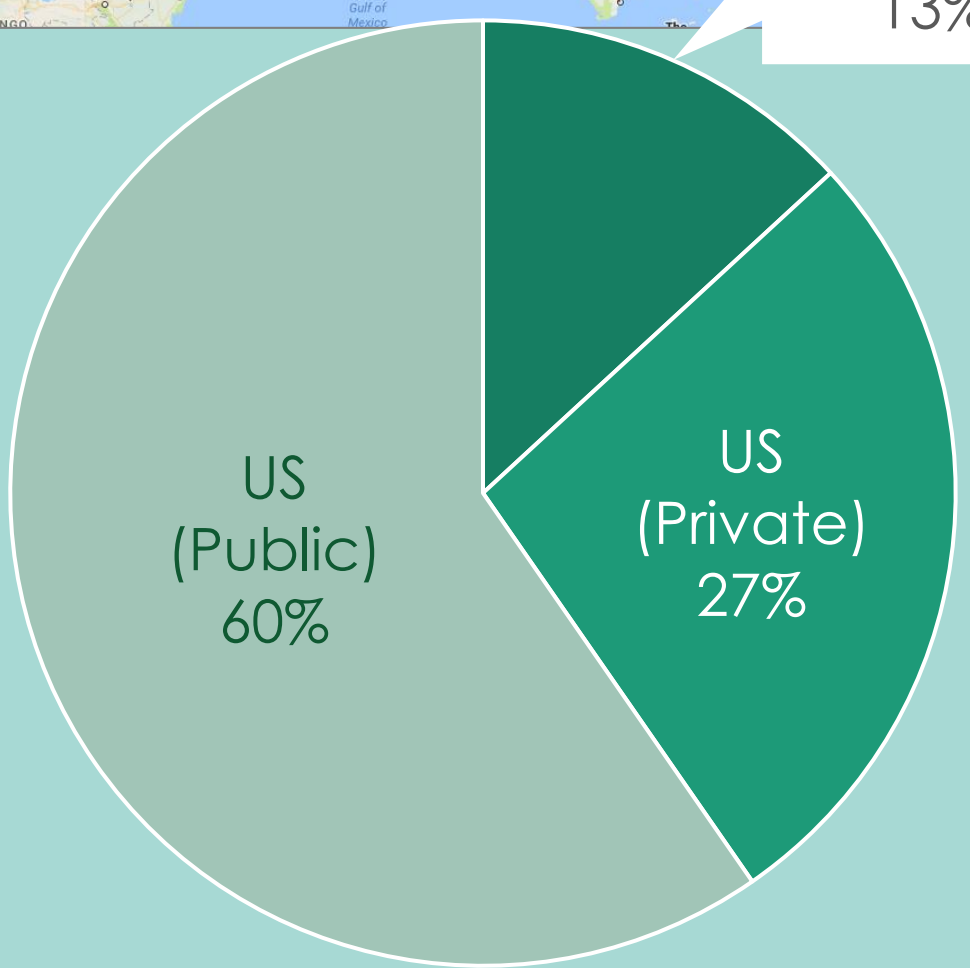
Searching was limited to publicly available content and each institution was allotted 30 minutes to mimic the experience of a student or researcher seeking information or support.

Demographics

Where are the ARL Libraries located?

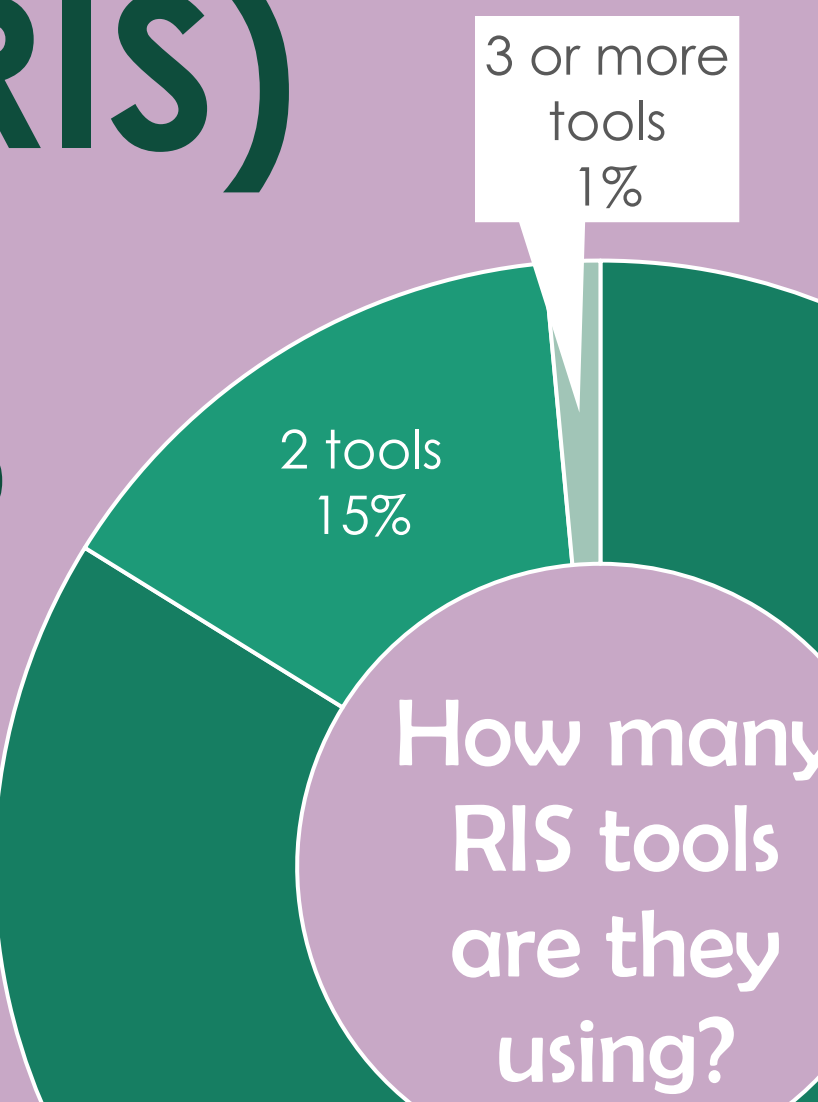


What type of institutions were included?



Researcher Information Systems (RIS)

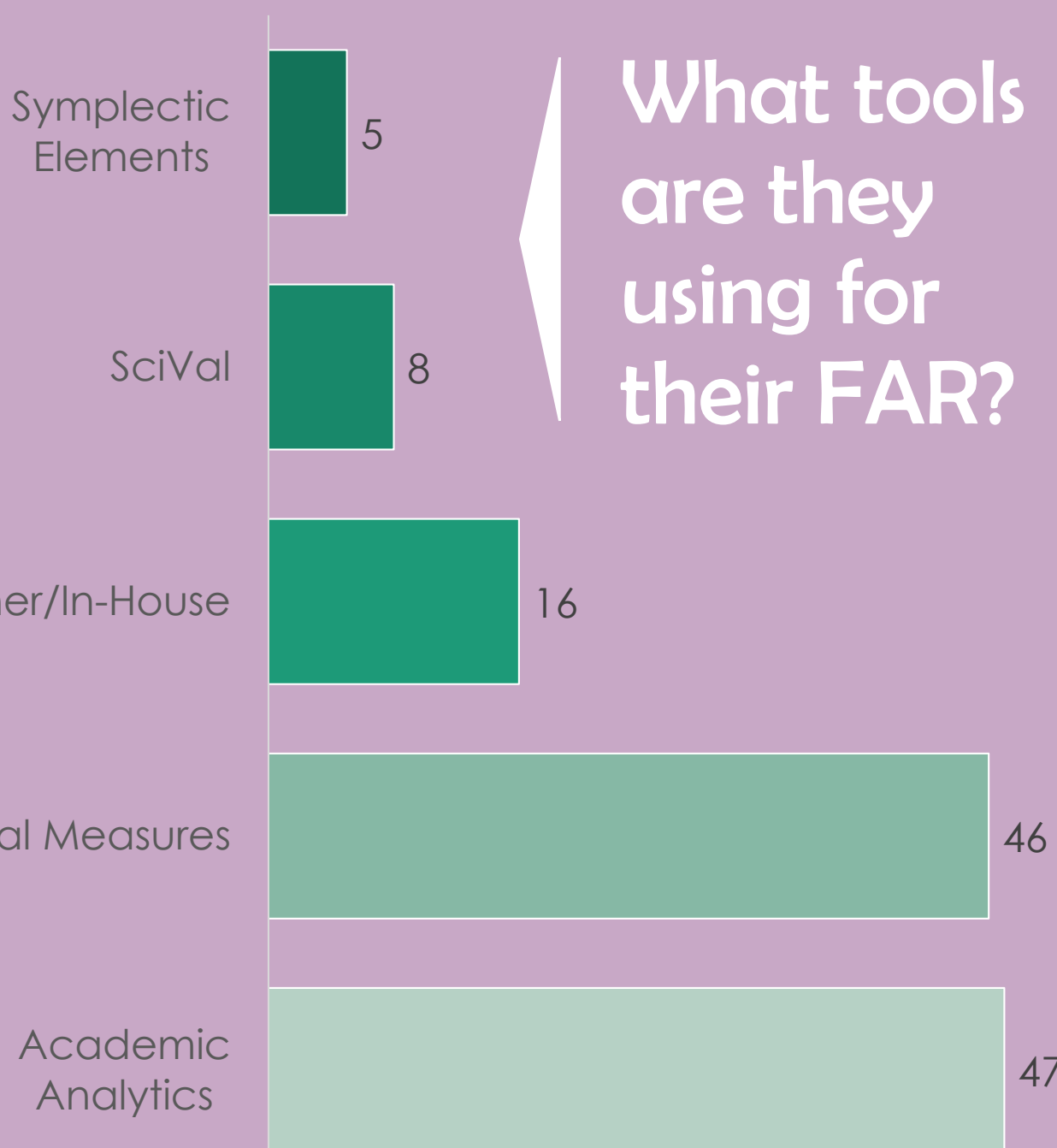
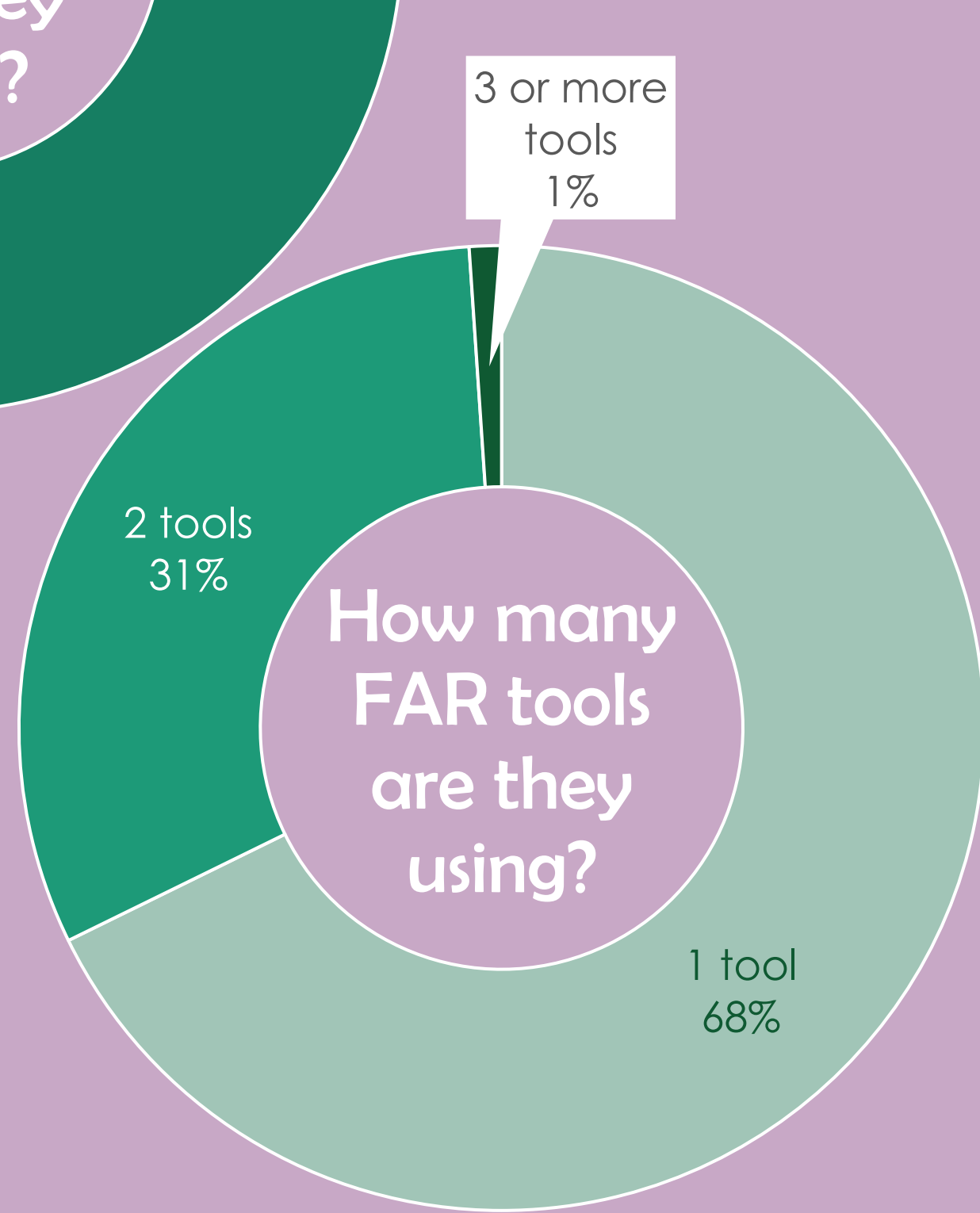
Does the institution have an RIS?
YES 59.5%
NO 40.4%



What tools are they using for their RIS?

Faculty Activity Reporting (FAR) Systems

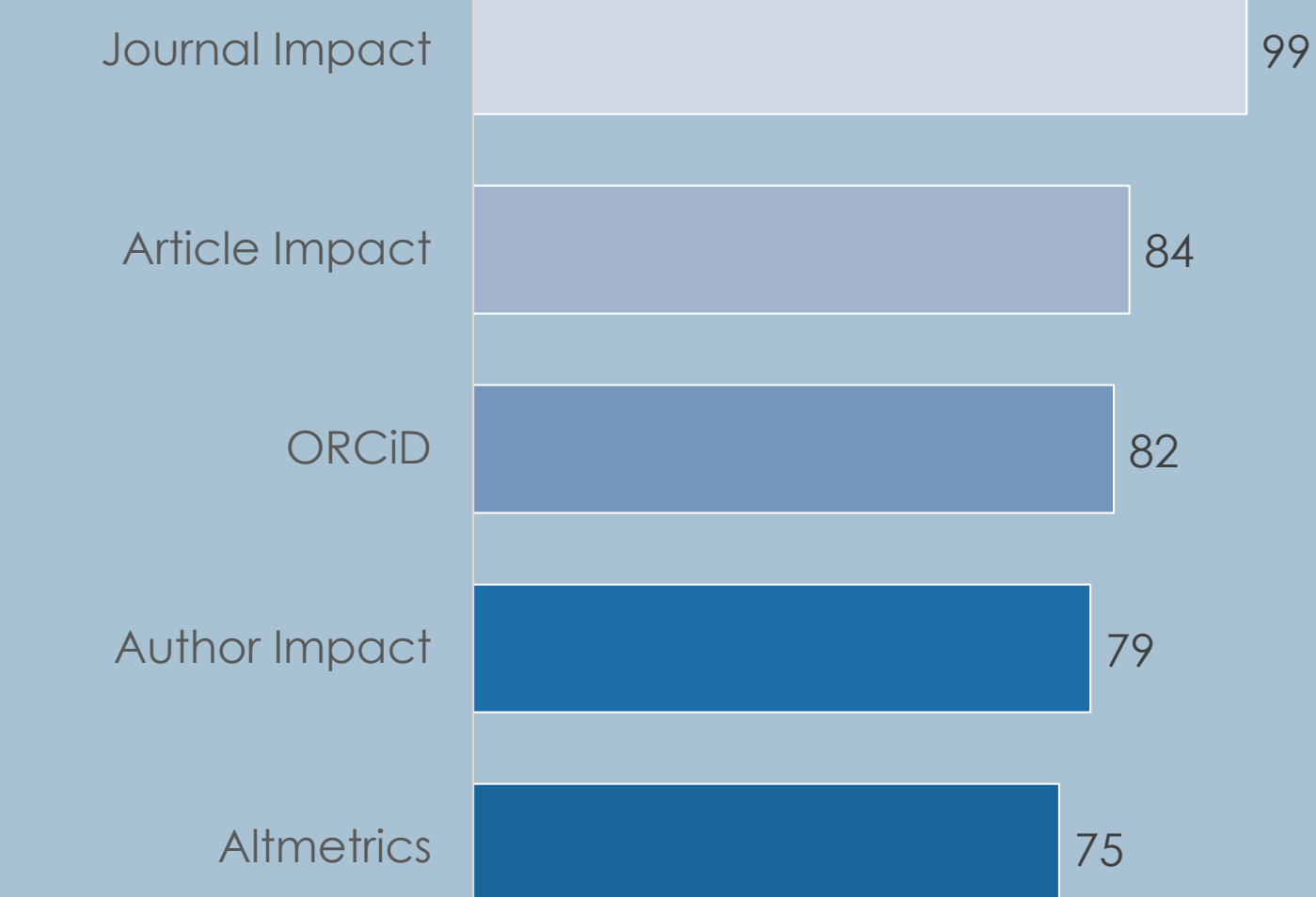
Does the institution have an FAR?
YES 80.9%
NO 19.1%



What tools are they using for their FAR?

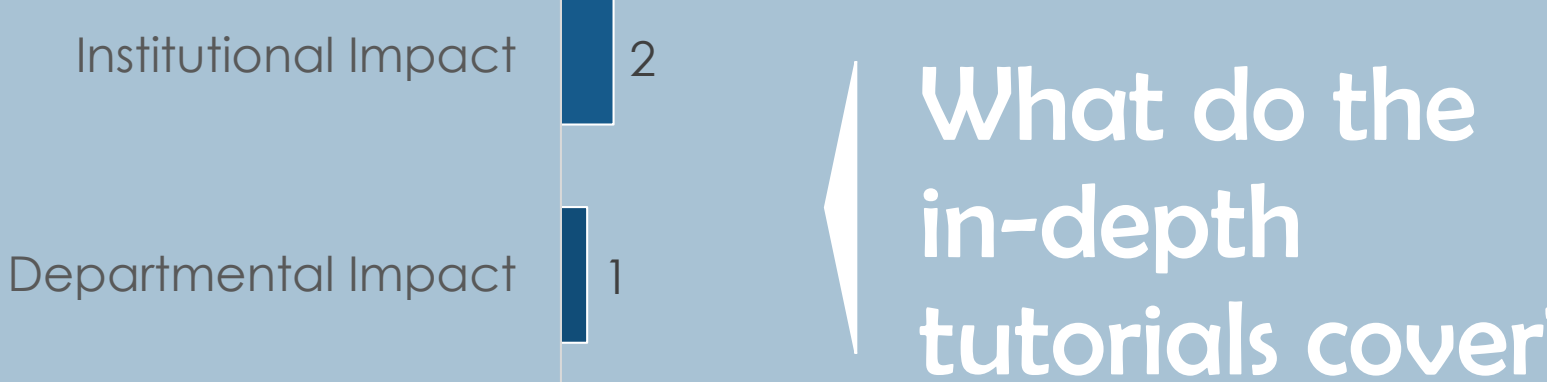
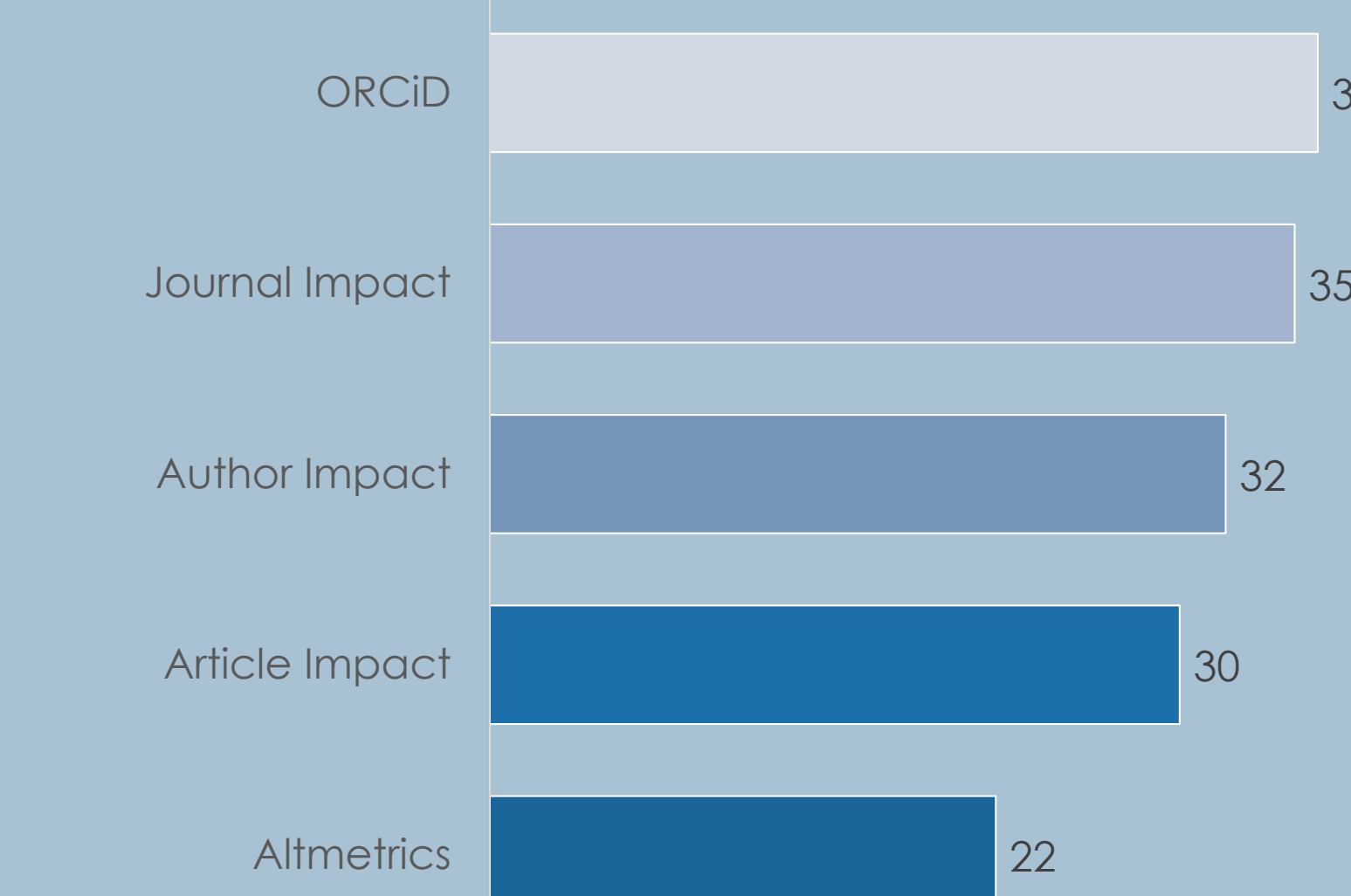
Websites and Guides

Does the institution have a basic webpage or brief guide about research impact?
YES 93.9%
NO 6.1%

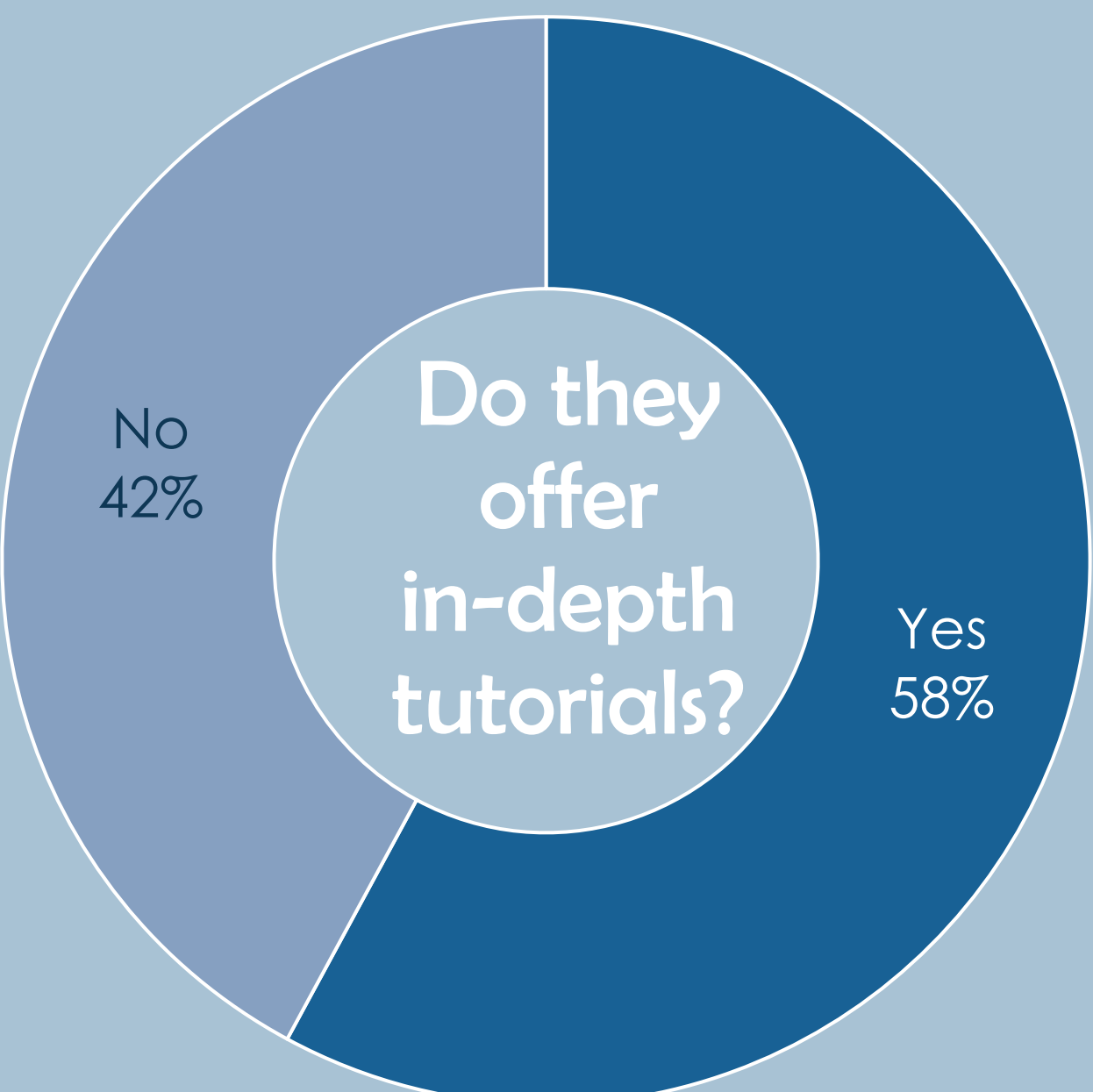


Who "owns" the guides?

Exclusively the Libraries Libraries + Another Unit Exclusively Another Unit



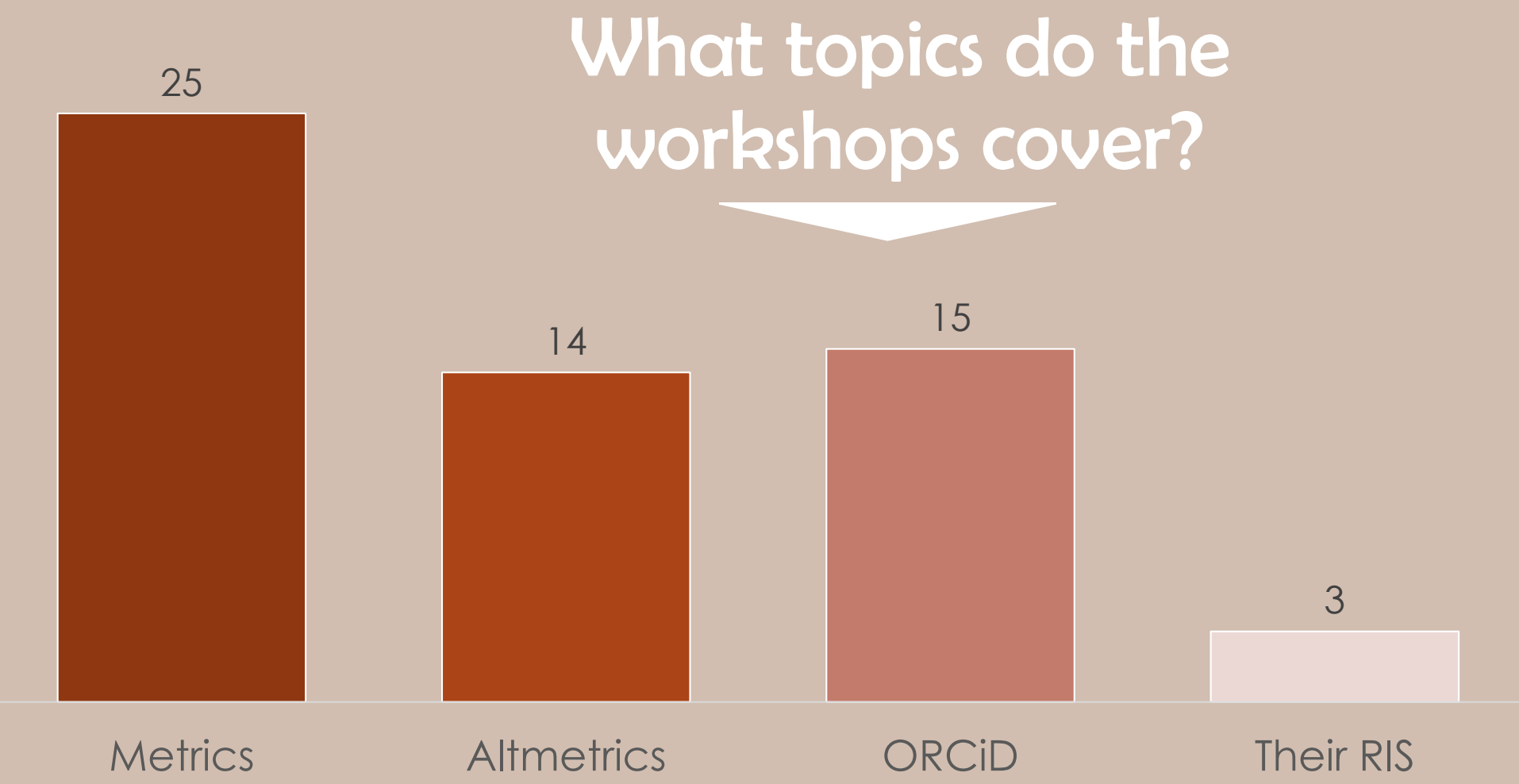
What do the webpages or guides cover?



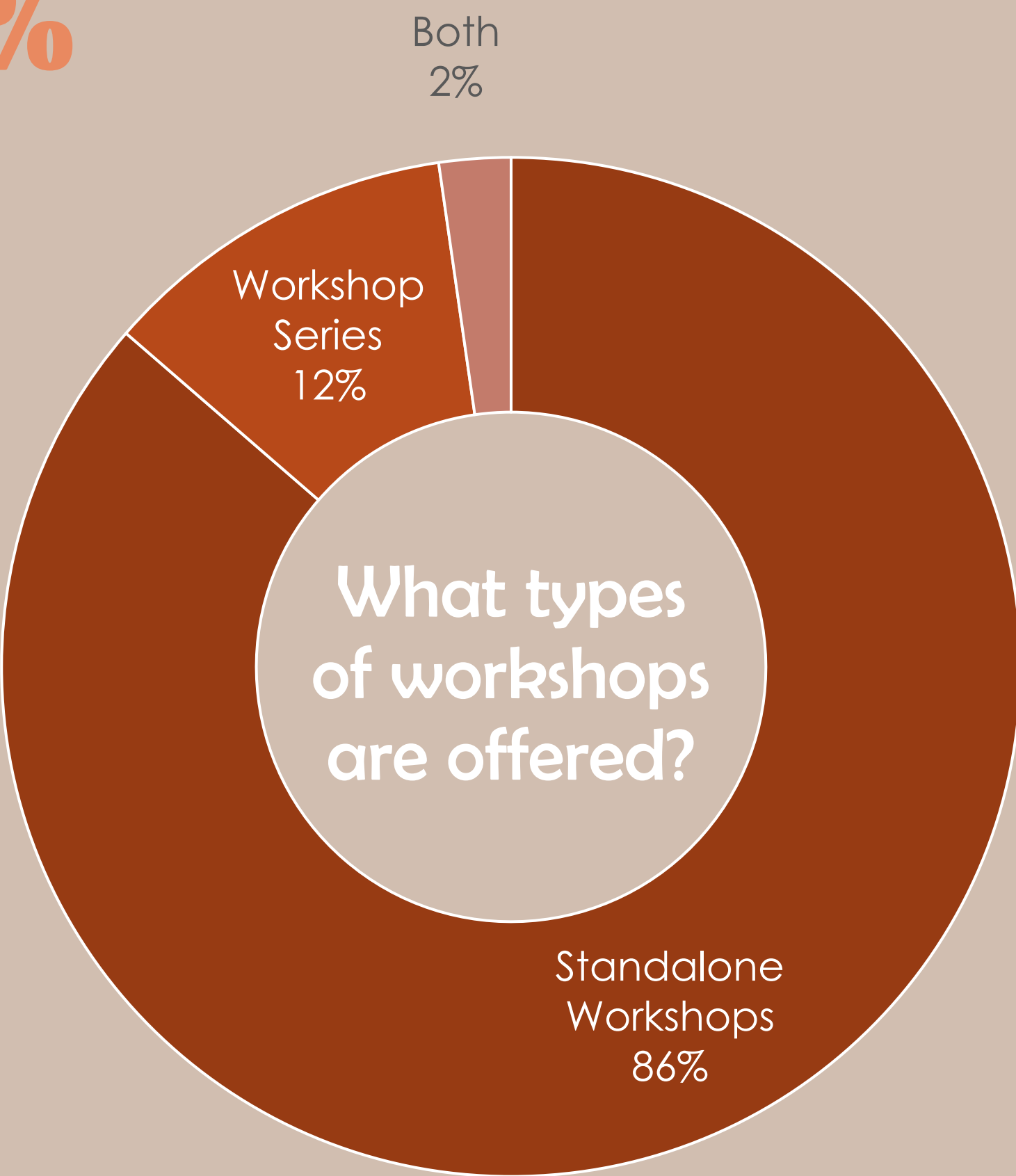
What do the in-depth tutorials cover?

Workshops

Does the institution offer workshops about research impact?
YES 38.6%
NO 61.4%

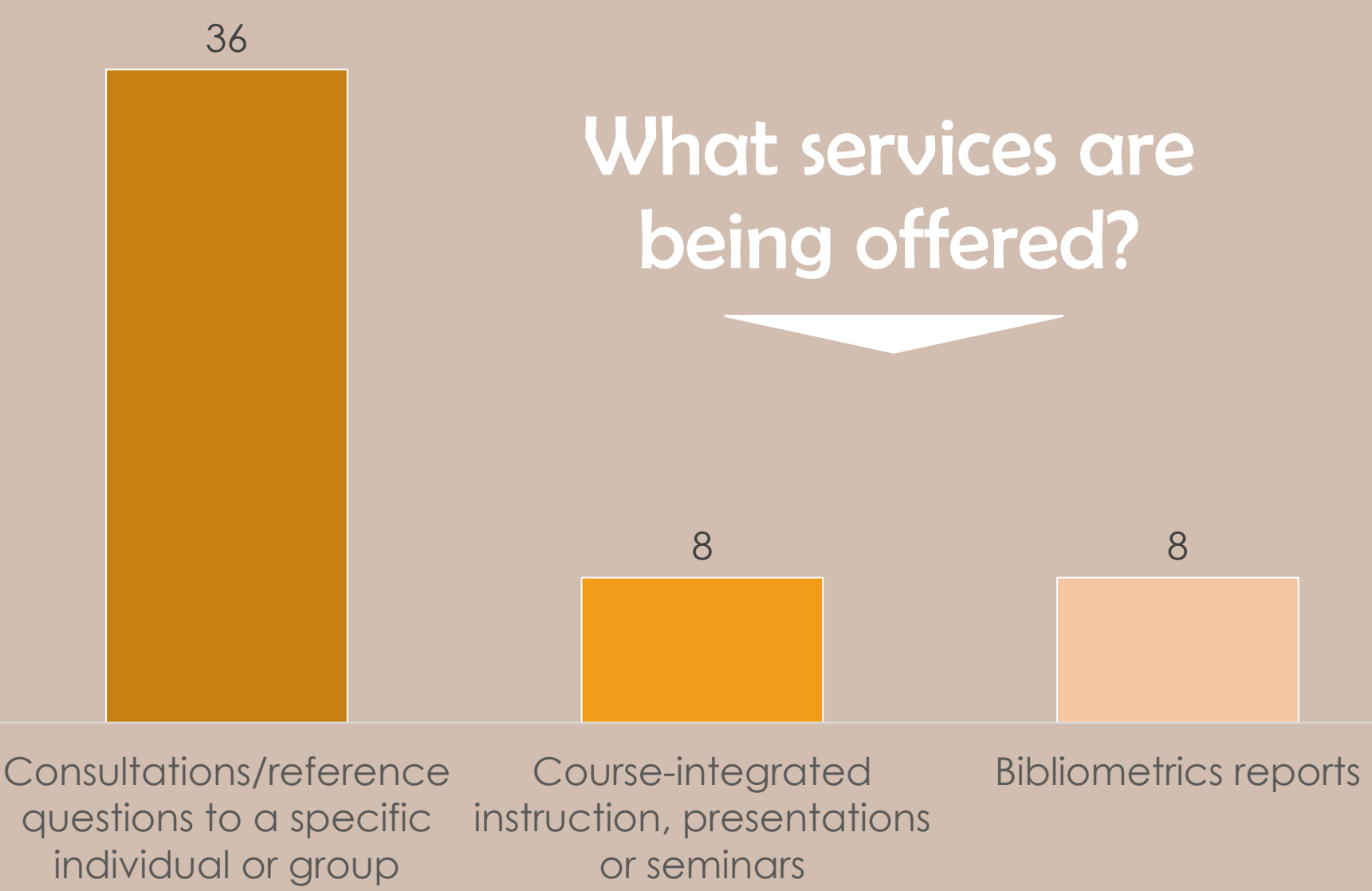


What topics do the workshops cover?



Other Services

Does the institution offer services other than workshops?
YES 34.2%
NO 65.8%



What services are being offered?

Staffing Model

Does the institution have individuals or groups assigned to research impact?
No 30.7%
Yes 69.3%



References

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5. Corrali, S., Kennan, M.A., & Afzal, W. (2013). Bibliometrics and research data management services: Emerging trends in library support for research. *Library Trends*, 61(3):636-674.
6. Suiter, A.M., & Moulaison, H.L. (2015). Supporting scholars: An analysis of academic library websites' documentation on metrics and impact. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 41(6):814-820.
7. Lewis, R., Sari, C.C., & Suiter, A.M. (2015). *SPEC Kit 346: Scholarly Output Assessment Activities*. Washington, DC: ARL.